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To the People of Georgetown.

A CARD

FROM

HENRY ADDISON, Esq.

TO

THE PEOPLE OF GEORGETOWN.

WASHINGTON:

PRINTED BY HENRY POLKINHORN.

1858.

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A CARD.

During the last year I was solicited by many of my friends to become a candidate for the Mayoralty at the ensuing election. Some of those citizens who had voted against me at the last election have also requested me to become a candidate. These solicitations have become so frequent and pressing that I feel it to be my duty to make this public announcement of my intentions. I have, too, been hurried into this course in consequence of the busy circulation of certain misrepresentations, which I shall avail myself of this opportunity to correct.

Before I proceed further, I wish it to be understood that my friends, few or many, can now regard me as their candidate for the Mayoralty, but in no sense as the candidate of a political party, or of any other party, sect, faction, caucus, clique or cabal, or to promote, or to subserve any other ends or interests than those of the *whole people of the town*. I have no private griefs to assuage, no resentments to maintain, nor any animosities to gratify. In my opinion hardly any other greaer evils could afflict the town than the mingling of personal feuds and the bitterness of political strifes, with its municipal administration.

One of the misrepresentations to which I have alluded, and of which I have a right to complain, is this: That I used my influence to defeat a late bill of the Councils which proposed to reduce the salary of the Mayor. If I used any such influence it must have been with the Mayor or some one or more members of the Councils—all of whom know that the charge is without a shadow of foundation. I have never seen that bill, and know nothing of its contents, further than what I gathered from public rumor, which was, that it proposed to reduce the Mayor's salary to the sum of six hundred dollars, and to ap-

point a street commissioner at a salary of four hundred dollars. Nor have I ever understood the reasons which constrained my gentlemanly successor to veto it, but have no doubt that he was impelled by considerations as conscientious as they were honorable. But, with my knowledge of the state of the corporate finances, and the still more deplorable condition of our roads and streets, should I be elected Mayor, I would feel it to be one of my first duties to recommend to the Councils a general street measure, which would involve the reduction of the Mayor's salary to the sum of six hundred dollars. Should it be adopted, I think it would obviate, to some considerable extent, expenses and nuisances which threaten to become intolerable. I would sign such a bill as that and let it have immediate effect.

It is alleged that I have been making enormous pecuniary demands upon the Corporation for services rendered in Congress, and at home, since my retirement. The Corporation never employed me, in any instance, to render any service in Congress for a pecuniary compensation, nor have I ever presented any claim to the Corporation for such service. The facts, which have been wildly misrepresented, are the following: In December, 1857, it was proposed to pay me a compliment by placing my name on the committee to attend to our business before Congress. The proposition was immediately resisted and rejected. Sometime afterwards, a gentleman called on me and stated that as I had a good deal of experience in the business of protecting our various interests in the District bridges, it was probable that I could be of service to the Corporation, and asked me if I would agree to be appointed by that body to attend to that business exclusively. I told him that I would render that service with pleasure, if it should be desired. He called again, and said that the Corporation would not make that appointment unless I would sign a written pledge that in no event would I make any charge for my services. At his urgent request, and that of others, I signed the paper. I had never dreamed of making any such

charge, and thought that the requiring of such pledge conveyed an intimation of disrespect, and I think so still.

In connection with this particular, I desire to say that I had thought that my views in regard to the Potomac bridge question, and all other things collateral or incidental thereto, were well understood by the people of Georgetown. Upon those matters I have now only a few words to say. I am utterly opposed to the Long Bridge, and will ever do all in my power to have it removed. The people, by an immense majority at the polls, have declared themselves in favor of a bridge at the Alexandria aqueduct, and a lateral stem to connect it with the Alexandria, Loudon and Hampshire Railroad. No one can be more in favor of that measure than I am, and so far as concerns a local railroad, I am in favor of that one, whichever it may be, that will first and most certainly put the west gate of the Capitol in connection with the Alexandria aqueduct. Not only so, but I should insist that all the rights, powers, and privileges which are granted to Washington city should also be granted to Georgetown.

A few months afterwards, without consulting me at all on the subject, the Corporation appointed me one of the committee to attend to the whole of its business before Congress, and before I had official notice of that appointment I was called on, by three different gentlemen, to attend *immediately* to as many different subjects, then under the consideration of Congress. I told them, one and all, that I should be compelled to decline that honor, for the reasons which are set forth in the following copy of a letter to the Corporation itself:

GEORGETOWN, D. C., *April 16, 1858.*

GENTLEMEN: Mr. Ould and Mr. Muncester have informed me that you did me the honor to appoint me recently a member of your Congressional committee. As it will not be in my power to accept that appointment, I feel that it is proper to notify you of the fact.

Your predecessors assigned to me the duty of doing all in my power to protect and promote your interests, so far as they are involved in the bridge questions, with the understanding that I was not to be compensated for that service. As I have

accepted that appointment, and as attention to the subject has already involved some twelve dollars of private expense, which was paid out of my own pocket, I trust you will not deem me as acting unreasonably in declining additional burdens of a kindred character.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
H. ADDISON.

Hon. BOARD OF ALDERMEN AND
BOARD OF COMMON COUNCIL.

Late in the last session of Congress I was visited by some highly respectable citizens of the town, who requested me to do what I could to defeat the Roberts proposition—to cede away a large portion of the territory of the town. Knowing that that measure had been approved by a very large majority of the Senate's District Committee, and that it would be sustained by many other influential Senators, who were among our best friends in that body, I declined a duty which involved so much responsibility. They called upon me again, and stated that they and two other gentlemen, whom they named, were anxious that I should proceed in the matter without delay. They promised me that I should be well paid if I succeeded in defeating the measure, but could pay me nothing in the event of a failure. Nothing was said to me about the Corporation, and I wanted nothing better than the responsibility of either of those gentlemen. I accepted their proposition, worked day and night, conveyed Senators to the locality, explained the injustice and hardship of the whole design, and, by the aid of Messrs. Hale, Brown, Seward, and Bright, and others, the measure was signally defeated, and the gentlemen by whom I was so flatteringly employed, if I am not very much mistaken, paid me the round sum of five hundred dollars. I really did not ask them where they got the money, nor do I think it would have been a very civil question. Another gentleman called and offered to pay me fifty dollars out of his own purse, which I declined to receive. I do not remember anything else in this connexion worth relating, except that I think I acted *very* imprudently in not taking the additional fifty dollars aforesaid.

I am not in the habit of declining offers which involved so much civility, and will try very hard to do better next time.

It is also reported that I made an improper charge for late services rendered by request of the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund. I am ready to meet any gentleman before the people, who may have anything to allege in that regard, or about any of my official conduct, or any act of mine in connexion with the affairs of the town, since the last Mayor's election.

It was never made my duty by the charter of the town, or any of its ordinances, to act as clerk or book-keeper in any of its departments. The keeping of the accounts of the Sinking Fund was made the special duty of the clerk of the Corporation. It was my rule, however, to keep a general diary of my official acts for my own convenience, as well as for my own security, in the event of difficulties. This I was enabled to do by employing a private clerk, whose services were paid for out of my own pocket. It was, also, my constant practice to examine the books of the clerk, that I might understand them, and detect errors when any occurred. When the operations of the commissioners were vastly extended, and it became a matter of great labor to the clerk to make out their annual reports, I consented to perform that duty for him, provided that a committee of the commissioners would examine my reports and certify that they were correct before they were sent to the Corporation. That this was not done for the two last years of my service, was owing to accidental causes, which were not under my control, and for which I was in no way responsible. For the truth of this, I can refer to Messrs. William S. Nichols, Philip T. Berry, and Samuel Copley. After my official relations had terminated with the Corporation, I did not think that it, or any of its agents, had any right to demand any service at my hands without making me a compensation commensurate with its value and importance.

The commissioners finally addressed me a letter informing me that if I would make the report for them, they would pay me a fair sum for the service. I made the report; it was criti-

cally examined, and carefully compared with the clerk's books and vouchers by the very competent gentlemen above named, who approved of it, and then the Board paid me, I presume, what it considered a fair compensation. Particularly I came to that conclusion when the fact was clearly established by my report, that the Fund had made a clear profit of more than forty thousand dollars. At the close of that report I said, "In conclusion, I desire to state that not one dollar of the money belonging in any manner to the Sinking Fund has ever been in my possession. But it would be uncandid not to say that I had such a constant and minute supervision of the whole of its affairs that it would have been impossible for any misapplication of its funds to have taken place without my knowledge and connivance, and that I am willing to be considered as fully responsible as those who really had the keeping of your money for any errors or wrongs which can possibly be detected."

In conclusion, I desire to state that this is the last time that I shall ever be a candidate for the Mayoralty, and take the opportunity to thank the good people of Georgetown for their long-continued kindness to me, personally, and for many public tokens of confidence and consideration.

HENRY ADDISON.

GEORGETOWN, D. C., *January*, 1859.

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